

Claims

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1. A toothbrush bristle, comprising:  
a bristle member (adapted for use as part of a set of toothbrush bristles), wherein the bristle member has a stepped configuration, including a smallest diameter, flexible top portion at an upper end of the bristle member, and a base portion having the largest diameter, providing stiffness and support for the bristle member.
  2. A bristle of claim 1, including a middle portion having a diameter slightly larger than the top portion.
  3. A bristle of claim 2, wherein the top portion has such a diameter and is otherwise configured to conveniently enter between teeth and gums of a user.
  4. A bristle of claim 2, wherein the top portion has a diameter of approximately 0.005 inches, the middle portion has a diameter of approximately 0.006 inches and the base portion has a diameter of approximately 0.007 inches.
  5. A bristle of claim 4, wherein the top, middle and base portions are all straight and have substantially uniform diameters along their respective lengths.
  6. A bristle of claim 1, wherein the top bristle portion has a free end which is rounded to facilitate entry of the top bristle portion between the teeth and gums of the user
  7. A brushhead, comprising:  
a plurality of tufts of bristle members, the tufts arranged and set into a base plate to form a brushhead, wherein the bristle member has a stepped configuration, including a smallest diameter flexible top portion at an upper end of the bristle member, and a base portion having the largest diameter, providing stiffness

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and support for the bristle member, wherein the top portion has such a diameter and is otherwise configured to conveniently enter between teeth and gums of a user.

8. A brushhead of claim 7, including a middle portion having a diameter slightly larger than the top portion and smaller than the base portion.

9. A brushhead of claim 8, wherein the top portion has a diameter of approximately 0.005 inches, the middle portion of approximately 0.006 inches and the base portion has a diameter of approximately 0.007 inches.

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